

or "when there seems to be something lacking"  
172 BELIEVERS WITH SOMETHING LACKING  
Acts 18:24-19:7

INTRODUCTION: In this paragraph we have two accounts merging into one.

They are put together obviously because of their intimate connection;

(1) the story of Apollos and his ministry,  
(2) and the story of the coming of Paul to Ephesus

I. The story of Apollos

A. The man himself

1. He was a Jew, an Alexandrian, a learned man, mighty in the scriptures

2. He was an eloquent orator, a product of Greek learning & culture.

3. He not only knew the Scriptures, but he had the ability to deal with them, and present them, and to master them, and understand them.

B. His ministry

1. It was not distinctly or completely Xtn, although he knew about Jesus and taught some things concerning His life & work

2. What was his equipment?

a. He had been instructed in "the way of the Lord."

b. He knew only the baptism of John.

c. He was a disciple of John, and

"the way of the Lord" referred to here is that referred to in Matthew, where John preached "Make ye ready the way of the Lord."

3. Where did Apollos get his knowledge?

a. Probably in his native Alexandria

b. It may have been from a primitive gospel writing which emphasized the ministry of John the Baptist and said nothing of Pentecost or of the church in Jerusalem, and possibly nothing of the atoning death or glorious res. of Jesus.

4. What was lacking in his understanding and ministry?

- a. He did not know the meaning of the Cross
- b. He was not acquainted with the fact and significance of the resurrection
- c. He was not familiar with the truth of the outpoured Spirit.

C. His enlightening experience

1. There were two people in Ephesus who knew much more about Jesus than he did; Priscilla and Aquila; they knew Christ experimentally, because they were His by the work of the Holy Spirit.

2. They took Apollos and helped him and instructed him more carefully.

a. One of the most beautiful touches about Apollos is the fact that he was willing to let two members of the congregation who listened to him, and knew more than he did, teach him.

b. And how much better it was for them to give such private help to a preacher whose ministry was defective, than to correct or denounce him publicly.

D. His subsequent ministry in Corinth.

1. "He helped them much that had believed through grace." (end of vs. 27)

2. "He powerfully confuted the Jews, publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." (end of vs. 28)

3. He proved to be a tower of strength to that church.

4. Paul speaks of him as watering the seed which he had sown, (I Cor 3:6).

He speaks of Apollos in the warmest terms as a fellow-apostle, (I Cor 4:9; 16:12).

## II. PAUL AND THE TWELVE DEFECTIVE BELIEVERS AT EPHESUS (19:1-7)

A. Paul's investigation and his instruction

1. His question, "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?"
  - a. "When" not "since" is the correct trans.
  - b. Their ans: "We did not so much as hear whether the HS was given."
  - c. They knew that the Spirit was promised by the great prophet John, but they did not know whether He had yet come; They knew nothing about Pentecost.
2. His next question: "Into what then were ye baptized?"
  - a. He assumes that they were baptized.
  - b. An unbaptized believer is not contemplated in the NT.
  - c. He regards it as most unusual and almost impossible that a baptized Christian should not have received the Spirit.
  - d. He finds that these people are not baptized Christian believers in our sense of the word, but that they are disciples of John the Baptist and were baptized unto his baptism of repentance, and not on the profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
  - e. Pre-Pentecostal baptism ~~as~~ proclaimed and administered by John the Baptist was a baptism of expectation rather than one of fulfillment, as Xtn baptism now was.
3. He then gave them instruction and revealed to them the fact that the baptism of John was preparatory and that they must go beyond him to Jesus.
  - a. Then he told them all that they did not know of the Savior, and of the resurrection, and the pouring out of the Spirit at Pentecost, and of the fact that through Pentecost men were brought into living union with X.
4. When they heard that, "they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus," (19:5) and when Paul laid his hands on them they

5. When Paul first met these 12 men in Ephesus he must have felt there was something lacking. They were sincere, honest men, but there was something lacking.

a. There must be many people in Church membership today who are not any more Christian in the NT sense of the word than these men were, <sup>or to some other position</sup> who have come to John's baptism ~~at~~ <sup>before</sup> the threshold of Xty - and no further.

b. They were honest men, obedient, sincere, who had followed the light as far as it had come to them; but there was a fuller light, and a brighter and larger life which was unknown to them and which they had never experienced.

c. Dr. Wm Barclay calls them "incomplete Xtns". He speaks of the preaching of John and Jesus the two stages of the religious life.

(1) First, there is the stage in which we awaken to our own inadequacy and our own deserving of condemnation at the hand of God.

This stage is closely allied to the time when we try to do better and inevitably fail because we try in our own strength.

(2) Second, there is the stage when we come to see that through the grace of Jesus Xt our condemnation is taken away. Closely allied with that stage is the time when we find that all our efforts to do better are strengthened and helped by the work of the HS, through whom we can do what we could never do ourselves.

(3) He says, "These incomplete Xtns knew the condemnation; they knew the moral duty of being better but the grace of Christ and the help of the HS they did not know.... Without the HS there can be no such thing as complete Xty."

d. The cold accuracy of honest morality and religious creed must be warmed by faith in